

City Council Minutes

February 11, 2002

The Council of the City of Milton-Freewater met in regular session on February 11, 2002 in the council chambers of city hall at 7:00 p.m.

The following members were present: Mayor Lewis Key, Councilors Saager, Widmer, Lyon, Schneck, Stewart, and Kelley. Staff members present were City Manager Delphine Palmer, Assistant City Manager Linda Hall, Public Works Superintendent Howard Moss, Police Chief Mike Gallaher and City Planner Gina Hartzheim.

Citizens present were Don Wiggins, Pat Wedin, John Short, Ellen DeGross, Ed Chesnut, Patty Key, Curtis Walter, Keith Woods, Merle Sherman, Orlin Hansen, Dwayne Gaines, Curtis Walter, David Fine, Bradley Humbert, Hal Phillips, Charlie Good, Doug Henrichs, and others.

Representing the press were Mike Shepherd of the Union Bulletin, Jennifer Hemmingsen of the East Oregonian, and Jeff Durham of the Blue Mountain Pioneer.

Councilor Kelley moved to approve the consent calendar. Councilor Stewart seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Lewis Key announced to the audience that this was the time in which citizens could approach the council.

Ed Chesnut approached the council and requested that Councilor Schneck remove herself from any discussion or vote regarding the official newspaper as she is a columnist for one and even though her participation with this particular newspaper is not for pay, Council Schneck may still have a conflict of interest and removing herself from this discussion would preserve her integrity.

Brad Humbert approached the council representing Milton-Freewater Little League Baseball and Softball. Mr. Humbert requested that the City consider help with funding of restrooms at the youth baseball field in Yantis Park. The bathrooms would be for both men and women and several people have volunteered labor for this facility. The Jaycees, Little League Baseball, and several business men and women in the community are willing to support this project as well. Mr. Humbert proposed a block structure with cement floor. Mr. Humbert suggested that he would donate his time and machinery to help construct the skate park if this project could be considered. Mr. Humbert also suggested that these two projects were going after the same monies. Councilor Kelley asked about these same monies and Mr. Humbert clarified stating that these two projects would request money from the City to help with the costs. Charlie Good, President of the Little League Association, also spoke to the council with regard to this project. The negatives of the portable facilities in use now are the accident factor, the high wind factor, and the sanitation factor. With state tournaments and college teams using our field, Mr. Good suggested we leave them with the best impression of our City. City Manager Delphine Palmer said that many cities have taken out these facilities due to vandalism. Mr. Humbert addressed the issue stating that the facility would be block cement and that they were pricing stainless steel fixtures. Councilor Widmer questioned the cost of the skate park with the volunteer labor and equipment. Mr. Humbert suggested the cost to be approximately half of that of Walla Walla's skate park at \$10,000 to \$20,000.

Councilor Widmer proposed that City Manager Delphine Palmer have Mr. Humbert and Mr. Good meet with all Department Heads that may be involved in this project and present this information at the next council meeting for action. Councilor Schneck seconded and the motion was passed unanimously.

Daryl Thompson of 820 Parallel Street informed the council that truck drivers entering the City were unnecessarily using their Jake-brakes. This caused undue noise and vibration to the extent that Mr. Thompson was almost knocked off of a ladder. Mr. Thompson asked who would be responsible for this issue. Mr. Thompson also asked if something could be done with the graffiti on the overpass. Public Works Superintendent Howard Moss addressed both issues stating that Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) would be responsible for placing signs restricting the use of Jake-brakes. Mr. Moss said too that the City was responsible for the graffiti. Councilor Schneck proposed that Mr. Moss resubmit a petition to ODOT with regard to Jake-brake usage. Councilor Widmer seconded and the motion was passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Rick Currin, Milton-Freewater Library Board Member, spoke to the council about the issue whether or not to forgive system development charges for the construction of the new library. Mr. Currin stated that they were now turning to the community to raise the remaining \$250,000 to \$280,000 needed to complete the new library. Councilor Widmer moved to forgive all system development charges and other related fees. Councilor Schneck seconded. Orlin Hansen, a community member, approached the bench and stated he did not want the Library Foundation to ask for any more money because Mr. Hansen did not want monies reflected in his utility bills. Mr. Hansen also suggested that the City not be involved in the construction as well, but to keep the construction contract in Oregon. Rick Currin then addressed Mr. Hansen's comments by informing the council that Bond Contractors is how the construction of the Library is covered. Councilor Widmer questioned the intent to hire local contractors and Mr. Currin stated that the intent of the Library Foundation is to hire local contractors and sub-contractors and also that these contractors are required to donate in kind to the library.

Brad Humbert stated that the general contractor involved with the library construction (Siebold) is using as many local contractors from Milton-Freewater as possible in every aspect of the construction of this edifice.

Councilor Schneck wanted clarification that the City has not donated anything to the Library Foundation to date, other than property, and that this waiver of fees would be the first.

Orlin Hansen stated that the City was required to give an added \$50,000 to the Library Foundation and Howard Moss said that the Valley Foundation asked that the City support the new library by adding \$50,000 to their budget for operations. Mr. Hansen reminded the council that the only request was for property from the Library Foundation, but now there is a second request for operation funds.

Councilor Kelley stated that the \$50,000 for operation had already been passed by the council.

Linda Hall, Assistant City Manager, reviewed the proposal to forgive all system development charges by Councilor Widmer and that the motion was seconded by Council Schneck. The motion was then passed unanimously.

The next issue was the appointment of Planning Commissioners, Budget Committee Members, and Library Board Members. Mayor Key proposed a list for Planning Commissioners as Charlie Good, Tony Turner, and Dwayne Gaines. For the Budget Committee, Mayor Key proposed Ed Chesnut, and for the Library Board, Ken Records. Councilor Saager moved to accept the proposed list. Councilor Schneck seconded and the motion was approved unanimously.

The next item of business was Ordinance #900 Establishing Certain Conduct on the Milton-Freewater Golf Course as a Violation. Delphine Palmer, City Manager, informed the council about golf balls straying to Mr. Johnson's house and that these did not necessarily happen in the course of play, but in competition. After reviewing the issue with City Attorney Doug Hojem, the ordinance was written to establish appropriate conduct on the golf course and that if there were a violation, the violation would be cited through Municipal Court. In addition to the citation, the person may temporarily or permanently be banned from the golf course. Ms. Palmer also stated that Doug Hojem received a letter from Mr. Johnson's attorney stating that he realizes this is an attempt to solve this issue, but that he, Mr. Johnson, is not completely satisfied. Councilor Saager moved Ordinance No.900, Establishing Certain Conduct On the Milton-Freewater Golf Course As A Violation, be introduced and full reading waived. Councilor Kelley seconded and a roll call vote was taken: Councilor Saager, yea, Councilor Widmer, yea, Councilor Lyon, yea, Councilor Schneck, yea, Councilor Stewart, yea, and Councilor Kelley yea. Motion carried unanimously. The City Manager then read the ordinance by title. Councilor Kelley moved to adopt Ordinance No.900 by title only and full reading waived. Councilor Lyon seconded and the motion carried unanimously. The City Manager read the ordinance by title. Councilor Kelley moved to adopt Ordinance No.900, Councilor Saager seconded and a roll call vote was taken: Councilor Saager, yea, Councilor Widmer, nay, Councilor Lyon, yea, Councilor Schneck, nay, Councilor Stewart, yea, and Councilor Kelley, yea.

Consideration of a Golf Course Policy Statement was next on the agenda. Councilor Stewart stated he had brought this issue to the attention of council in May of 2001 and again last September. Public Works Superintendent Howard Moss responded to Councilor Stewart by stating that we should be able to manage the golf course as hired to do. There are two special tournaments that get special treatment during the summer time, but Mr. Moss likened it to "spring clean-up". Mr. Moss further stated that he has scaled-back the preparation involved before these tournaments. Councilor Schneck questioned the intent of this new policy.

Discussion ensued between several councilors.

Councilor Saager moved that the Golf Course Policy remain the same for time being. Councilor Kelley seconded and the motion passed with yes votes from Councilors Saager, Widmer, Lyon, and Kelley. Councilors Schneck and Stewart voted no.

Consideration of City Council donation to the D.A.R.E. program was next on the agenda. Linda Hall, Assistant City Manager, stated this was a carry-over from the last meeting, where a presentation was given showing the work done in fifth-grade classrooms. Councilor Saager asked that staff research for a possible donation to come from Council's budget and go towards the programs, which are solely supported by the community. No City money or General Funds go towards these programs. Staff has

researched that and found that \$300 could be taken from professional services line item on the City Council budget and we are proposing that such a motion be adopted. Councilor Saager moved that \$300 from the Council budget be donated to the Milton-Freewater D.A.R.E. program. Councilor Schneck seconded and the motion was approved unanimously.

New Business item number 4F, Official Newspaper Designation, was tabled because the information from City Attorney Doug Hojem had just been received and council members needed time to review the information.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Delphine Palmer, City Manager, reported that a room for council participants to engage in discussion is not available at this time.

Pamphlets were given out to the audience tonight, which tell about our council meetings and what is expected. Ms. Palmer felt that it was good that people from the audience came up and approached the council by identifying themselves. We should ask them, for the record, to state their address too.

Also, Ms. Palmer stated she had the "Job Analysis" form that she has distributed to all the members of the clerical union. This will give a in-depth description of these jobs and facilitate placing the proper job classification for each employee.

Ms. Palmer also began negotiations with the Supervisory-Tech Union. Their two-year contract comes up in June 2002. She believes the negotiation process will go well.

Ms. Palmer states that all are working on budgets at this time. The next step is to review departmental budgets.

Friday the City Managers are meeting (Ms. Palmer has met with several managers before) and these meetings will take place quarterly to discuss different topics that may be similar.

Ms. Palmer said that she wanted some kind of a "Budget Document" that summarizes and is easy to understand so that Department Heads, Council, and Citizens may all get a picture of where we are and in a language we can all understand. Dave Richmond, Finance Director, has found that our accounting software Caselle and Microsoft Excel are compatible and he will be able to show some samples of formats that may be used.

Ms. Palmer also talked about the many "snowbirds" from here. She proposes an automated payment program for these people. Ms. Palmer did this in Newport, Washington and it was widely accepted and very successful.

Gina Hartzheim, City Planner, gave the Council an update on her department, design and landscaping standards that have been the topic of discussion at the Planning Commission for over a year. The discussion consists of landscaping that will enhance our commercial and industrial areas in town. Commercial zoning is located along most of the Main Street area of our town and especially the state Hiway system of our town. The Planning Commission is trying to find a happy medium between regulation and something to help better our community. Rite-Aid has been adopted as the city's poster-child. There is the landscaping around the perimeter so you don't just see a sea of asphalt. There is a nice ratio of windows to wall area. The awnings are very attractive to the building itself. The Planning Commission is proposing a smorgasbord so that new businesses would not necessarily be required to remodel or build on the same scale as Rite-Aid. There will be several ideas that will be as pleasing as Rite-Aid,

but not as cost prohibiting. Other cities, model codes for small cities, and sister-city landscaping percentages were all researched. Several drawings were then shown to the council.

Ms. Hartzheim also spoke about a street-tree plan that the commission would really like to see implemented. Variety of trees are an issue so as not to be hazardous to the orchard industry.

Councilor Schneck asked if there was language used to address the "screaming yellow" issue. Ms. Hartzheim said not at this time as some members of the commission are sensitive to personality. Councilor Saager asked if Ms. Hartzheim was working with the County Extension Agent to insure the use of trees which are compatible. Ms.

Hartzheim said that she was working with this agency and the street-trees proposed were taken from a hand-out issued by utilities so there won't be any conflict with power-poles. They also do not want trees with root systems that interfere with water and sewer lines. Tom Darnell, Extension Agent, is researching this now.

Chief Gallaher addressed the council on behalf of Officer Goodwater and the fifth-grade students with the D.A.R.E. program by extending a deep Thank You for the contribution the Council made in behalf of the D.A.R.E. program.

COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilor Saager suggested, with regard to the auto-pay plans, that this should not be a difficult process to set this up with the banks. City Manager Delphine Palmer stated that she had seen bank charges from \$.50 to \$2.00 per transaction and that this needed to be researched. The other research would be to determine the work impact. Councilor Widmer disclosed his displeasure during the goal-session on Saturday when a person sat amongst the invited staff and council.

Councilor Lyon received notification from Linda Hall, Assistant City Manager, that mentioned that Chief Gallaher said the State legislators are thinking about cutting the crime labs from eastern Oregon. Councilor Lyon requested that Chief Gallaher address the council and citizens as to how this affects the City so we may be informed in the event we write our legislative leaders.

Chief Gallaher said he was not completely informed, but that

D.A. Chris Brauer suggested the closure to be a possibility due to state budget considerations. The facility in Pendleton would be closed and this facility is used weekly to analyze evidence. If we had to ship our evidence to Salem, Oregon to a consolidated lab, this would be difficult. The return time would be dramatically extended and we would be responsible for two-way shipping expenses.

Linda Hall, Assistant City Manager, stated emphatically that she would give out names, addresses, fax numbers, and e-mails to anyone who called her office and wanted to write their legislators.

Councilor Schneck questioned the status of our dying server. Delphine Palmer, City Manager, stated it was gasping and that we were going to make some recommendations as to the solution of this dilemma.

Councilor Stewart had a request from a volunteer senior group that will be having a banquet in Boardman for Morrow-Umatilla County Volunteers. They would like to borrow the large flag that was flown on the front of City Hall. Council supported the idea as long as the flag could be repaired and cleaned before the event and City of Milton-Freewater could get some recognition for loaning the flag for the occasion.

At 8:55 p.m. Council adjourned to Executive Session.

Lewis S. Key, Mayor